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DISUNION—ITS REMEDY.

SPEECH

OF

GEO. M. WESTON, OF MAINE,

BEFORE THE

Republican Association of Washington,

AUGUST 2, 1860.

Mr. WESTON said :

Among the many aspects and relations of the Presidential election in which the country is now engaged, I propose to select for particular consideration at this time, its connection with the question of the continued union of these States. That question, whenever it is raised at all, must always be of primary importance, and it is one to which many present circumstances combine to attract public attention.

The great and determining feature of the pending political struggle is the disruption of the Democratic party, commenced at Charleston, and consummated at Baltimore; and it is a fact patent to all men, that this disruption had its efficient origin in the desire of leading public men in the Gulf States to detach the South from all remaining party connections at the North, to define still more sharply the geographical lines upon which the politics of the country have turned of late years, and to make the election of a Northern President, which was certain to result from this segregation of sections, the basis and occasion of a dismemberment of the Union, either immediate upon the inauguration of such a President, and "*in advance of overt acts*," or to follow soon from the collisions to which distinctly geographical parties necessarily tend. The recent disruption of the Democratic party was an arranged and intended result, for the plain reason that the measures which brought it about could have resulted in nothing else. When Alabama, and the States sympathizing with Alabama, demanded the endorsement of a slave code, as the only condition upon which they would co-operate with their old associates, a disruption was inevitable. If even the Democratic

Convention had submitted to the prescribed test, the Democratic party of the North could not have submitted to it, and an explosion, either in the Convention or among the constituents of the Convention, was a fixed fact from the beginning. It was a foreseen and an arranged fact from the beginning; and as those who devised it must have thereby renounced all hope of political power in the Union, it could only have been done under the prompting of some scheme which was to find its consummation *out* of the Union. When a minority section repels, renounces, and cuts off all alliances, it must be with a view to separate and independent action. An exclusively Southern party can mean nothing else, in intention and prospect, than a Southern Confederacy. Northern parties may be formed to rule the Union, but Southern parties can only be formed to leave it. It was, in short, to "*precipitate the South into revolution*," that Mr. Yancey, the author of that famous phrase, and the men acting with Mr. Yancey, devised the Alabama test, and are now pressing it to its inevitable results.

As, then, the secession from the Conventions at Charleston and Baltimore means secession from the Union, Mr. Breckinridge and General Lane are, in this contest, the standard-bearers of disunion, and are not to be the less sternly denounced and resisted, because they may be personally patriots, betrayed into a false position by that passion which is said to be the last infirmity of honorable minds. The glittering prize of the Presidency has turned the heads of older men than Mr. Breckinridge. The citizen of a State proverbial for its attachment to the Union, the representative of a name honorably identified with the public service during the whole

period of our national existence, and connected in the maternal line with the Declaration from which our national existence dates, he is bound by many ties to be faithful to his country. It is not against him, or against the gallant soldier who is associated on the same ticket with him, that I have either inclination or occasion to bring any railing accusation. It is not the first time in the history of politics that a bad cause has had the benefit of honorable names, and it is even gratifying, as a confession of the weakness of the disunionists, that they did not dare to take the field under the banner of recognised champions, but have masked themselves behind candidates who do not personally participate in their purposes of treason, and who would never have been selected as candidates, if the conspirators had any hope, or wish, to elect them.

The indications from the South are, that this disruption of the Democratic party by Mr. Yancey and his associates, by a premature exposure of their plans, will break them down at home, and thus relieve the country from any further immediate trouble from them. The scheme of voluntarily insuring the election of a Republican President, with a view to making such an election the pretext of resistance and civil war, proves too bald for even the latitude of the Gulf States. It is no longer the North that the disunionists have to contend with, but their own neighbors, and with every prospect of being worsted in the struggle. The Bell party, always a Union party, and now rallying under that name, combined with the friends of Judge Douglas, make a majority in probably every Southern State, and certainly a majority in the aggregate vote of the Southern States. If this proves to be so, Mr. Yancey's "revolution" is indefinitely postponed; and a revolution indefinitely postponed is a revolution extinguished. Revolution is an article which spoils by keeping.

The indications are, that the disunionists have sacrificed the fruit of years of patient plotting and of laborious sapping and mining, in a few days of hasty and misdirected councils. By the same act which gives power to their enemies, they have fatally divided their friends. They have made themselves responsible to their own States for the election of a Republican President. In itself, the election of such a President by the exclusive support of the free States, if it occurred in spite of all the efforts of the South to prevent it, would excite an exasperation and alarm in that quarter of which a dangerous use might be made. But when it is brought about by the palpable connivance of Southern politicians themselves, it is against them that the anger of the South will be directed; and as new quarrels, like new loves, swallow up old ones, it is contention in the bosom of the slave States themselves which promises to supersede the late contention between the North and South. If Mr. Yancey accomplishes that result, he will have accomplished a good which he did not intend. But it has happened to other men before him, that—

"The gun oft aimed at duck or plover,
Ears wide, and kicks its owner over."

I propose, however, to give to the discussion of this question of the Union, a range wider than that of the immediate movements in the field of politics, and to show how it is that the continuance in power of such a party as the Democratic party has become, by degeneration, during the present and late Administrations, must inevitably have terminated in the overthrow of the Government itself, and that it is no less essential to Union, than to Liberty, that, by the success of the Republican party, public affairs should be brought back to the old landmarks of Washington and Jefferson.

It is the habit of many persons to deal in a lump with the threats of disunion which come to us from the South, as utterly destitute of sincerity, and as mere scarecrows to prevent those from taking possession of public power who are entitled to it by numbers and other circumstances. It seems to me to be ignoring the authentic history of the country during a generation past, and the most indubitable indications of the present day, to deal with the subject in that way. The disunion tendency of the South is no sham, but a serious reality. Dangers are not avoided by shutting our eyes to them, but by exploring their causes, gauging their true proportions, and taking timely, well-adapted, and sufficient precautions against them. It is in vain that we may satisfy ourselves that the preponderance of material and political reasons, to induce the South to remain in the Union, is overwhelmingly great. It may nevertheless be true, and is nevertheless true, that large numbers of influential persons at the South desire to try their fortunes under an entirely new cast of public affairs, and have long done so. Even in private affairs, men oftentimes subordinate their interests to their passions, and are still oftener deluded by their passions as to the direction in which their interests lie. In public affairs this is still more true; because, while political passions are vehement, the restraint of the effect of political results upon individual interests is appreciably felt by but few. It is not safe, then, to conclude that the South will not dissolve the Union, because the South would lose much and gain nothing by doing so. The question is, now, not what our judgment is, but what their judgment is, upon those points; because it is by their own opinions, and not by ours, that they will be controlled. And there is the farther possibility that they may sacrifice even their own notions of their own interests to the promptings of pride, susceptibility, and political rancor, which have instigated nine-tenths of the wars and revolutions of mankind.

The Southern disposition to disunion of the present day is connected with the agitation of what is called the slavery question; but it originated in an altogether different subject. It was not abolitionism, but the tariff, which aroused the nullification of 1830-32. South Carolina was apparently ready to go out of the Union thirty years ago, not because slave property was assailed, but because, according to theories which obtained generally in the South, the planting interest was made to contribute, unconstitutionally and unjustly, to the enrichment of Northern man-

ufacturers. Comparatively, the free States had made, as they are still making, much the greatest advancement in wealth, as well as in numbers, and this superior advancement was and is attributed, by many persons at the South, not to the greater industry of the North, but to some chicanery of legislation, or commerce, or both, by which Southern labor is made to pay tribute to the North. The section which, with incomparably greater natural advantages, sees itself distanced in the race of material prosperity, finds nothing easier than to satisfy itself that, instead of suffering from any fault or misfortune of its own, it is the victim of Northern robbery. It was precisely this comparison between Northern and Southern progress, which Mr. Madison, in 1832, described as the real origin of that "*Southern susceptibility*," which, as a prudent man, he felt to be so considerable a danger in our public affairs.

Although it is now not the tariff, but abolitionism, which is chiefly presented as the incentive of disunion, and as a justification of it, it is largely aided by the belief, which still has a lodgment in the Southern mind, that if the Southern States had the separate control of their own affairs, they could add, to the present profits of their planting interests, the profits of the commerce which rests upon the products of their agriculture.

It is in a Southern Confederacy that is thought to be seen, not merely an escape from the irritation and danger of Northern intermeddling with their peculiar institution, but an escape also from an unprofitable partnership, and the commencement of that wished-for day, when the South will be its own commercial factor, and do its own manufacturing; when Norfolk and Charleston, relieved of the overshadowing competition of the Northern cities, will become great marts of trade; when Southern steam lines will furrow the ocean, and when European alliances will restore the South to that comparative prosperity (exaggerated by tradition) which it enjoyed before the Revolution. Ideas like these have been earnestly enforced by the press and the politicians in that quarter during a generation. During all that period, they have constituted the staple of the annual addresses and resolutions of Southern Commercial Conventions. It is not surprising that they have produced a deep and wide-spread effect. If such ideas are not sound, they are, at any rate, not absurd, and they are, beyond a peradventure, sincerely believed in by intelligent men. Political economy is not an exact science, like geometry. It offers as boundless a range for contradictory opinions as medicine, and it is not in our day and generation that we shall have any authoritative solution of questions which have divided mankind, ever since there has been such a thing as public wealth to be the subject-matter of debate.

With the irritations of the slavery question, superadded to the older notions of the epoch of South Carolina nullification in respect to the influence of the Union upon the relative prosperity of the sections which compose it, it would be a strange infatuation to be incredulous as to the

fact, affirmed to us by friend and foe, by men who rejoicingly proclaim it, and by men who deprecate and deplore it, of the existence of a tendency to disunion at the South, not, perhaps, predominant in a single State, but considerable enough, in many States, to justify anxiety.

The constitution of Southern society invites to the changes and new fields for enterprise which are anticipated from disunion. Southern society is not destitute of conservative elements, but it abounds in ingredients of the opposite character. There is no better recruiting ground in the world for an army, for either officers or soldiers, than the slave States. The classes without employment are large, embracing not merely the poor, to whom the opportunity of wages is not offered, but those in a different condition of life, who can find no career to absorb their activity, save in politics or war. The energies which, at the North, would be exhausted in commerce, upon the stock exchange, or in speculative enterprises connected with the material development of the country, have no such vent at the South. But these energies, unenfeebled by the luxury of more wealthy communities, and preserved by the virtue of race from degenerating into passive and contented idleness, must find a vent in something. And at the South, even the acquisitive spirit, as well as the spirit of restlessness, takes the direction of filibustering. Familiar with no other form of property than land and negroes, they find it exactly congenial with their habits of life and of thought, to seize new territories, and carve fortunes out of virgin soils, won with the sword, and cultivated by enforced labor. The men in that section, already rich, like Mr. Senator Hammond, of South Carolina, will in vain inculcate repose and quiet. The planters are numerous, but the men who are destitute of plantations are still more numerous, and the vision of a Southern Confederacy, with the slave trade reopened, and with rich and helpless Mexico and Central America and the islands of the Gulf in sight, and within the reach of easy appropriation if the restraint of the North was once thrown off, presents temptations which are most attractive, and, to many, irresistible. Slavery, in the vices, and even in the virtues, which it develops, is the breeding and nursing mother of war, of conquest, of filibustering, and of restless change. Passions and excitableities, which elsewhere would be absorbed in the pursuits of peaceful gain, or frittered away in luxury and fashion, are there concentrated upon ambition and political enterprise. The men of the South who have fortunes to achieve, see no road so easy as that which they can open with their courage and their swords. It is not to reproach the South that I say these things, but because it is a necessary part of any correct description of the elements which make up its social condition. Many of its characteristics, if not virtues, are akin to the virtues; and, so far as directed in patriotic channels, have achieved for the South a distinction in the national service, civil and military, of which it has reason to boast. Southern contributions of wisdom in legislative council, of administrative talent in the cabinet, and

of prowess in the field, justify all the pride which they create. The danger is, that the vigor and stamina of stock, still uncorrupted and unimpaired, which have achieved these distinctions for the South, are tending in the direction of revolutionary change.

Precisely to what extent disunion sentiments may have gotten possession of the South, that is to say, precisely what numerical proportion of the people of the South have become indoctrinated with such sentiments, it is difficult to determine. But that they have practically controlled the South for some years past, is certain, although this may have happened only because men of extreme views, in particular conditions of the popular mind, have an influence disproportioned to their numbers. Precisely when the Democratic party of the South succumbed to the nullifiers, it may also be difficult to determine. Mr. Blair dates it as far back as President Polk's time; but it was proclaimed to the world when President Pierce took Col. Jeff. Davis into his Cabinet. From that day to this, the secessionists of the Gulf States have ruled the Democratic party; and, ruling that, have ruled the country with a rod of iron. Mr. Buchanan resisted feebly in the first days of his Administration, but was soon brought to submission by the muttering thunder of Alabama and Mississippi. The effect of party organization has been to throw all power into the hands of a few men, who had a fixed and determinate policy. Some States, as for example Virginia, have had no policy, but have been simply intent upon preserving the harmony of the Democratic party, for the sake of the plunder it afforded. Men who merely want harmony, must always yield, for the sake of it, to men of fixed ideas and resolute purposes. Mr. Senator Hunter, the favorite statesman of Virginia, and well meriting that position by his talents and his accomplishments, could find no other advice to give to his party friends in the throes of dissolution at Charleston, than to "*keep the South a unit.*" If he did not see it, others did, that to "*keep the South a unit,*" Virginia must follow Alabama; and so she did at last, but with reluctance, with lingering steps and slow, and not until after the interval of painful doubt which was interposed between Charleston and Baltimore. But having no other tradition to be governed by than this one repeated to her by Mr. Hunter, to "*keep the South a unit,*" it was an inexorable necessity that she should yield at last to States not governed by traditions, but by men of strenuous enterprise and active passions.

But whatever the philosophy of it may be, or however it may have been brought about, the fact is certain, that the nullifiers have ruled the South and the Democratic party for years past, and have thereby ruled the country, and shaped its public policy. And of course they have ruled the country in the interest of their own ultimate scheme, which is to dissolve the Union, and establish a Southern Confederacy. By a strange fortune, it has been the men in the administration of the Government who have been plotting

its overthrow. The men who have controlled the power and resources of the Union are those who have used them to prepare the way for breaking the Union up. The thing steadily aimed at has been a slave empire, controlling the shores and islands of the Gulf of Mexico. To this end, Cuba was to be acquired, at the cost of no matter how lavish a use of other people's money. To this end, the territory and national independence of Mexico have been assailed, now by filibustering enterprises, now by Presidential propositions to take military possession of coveted provinces, and now by fraudulent treaties, professing amity, but meaning and accomplishing subjugation. To this end, transits to California have been sacrificed to the efforts of Southern chiefs to establish there, with the connivance of the authorities of the United States, a Government founded upon "*military principles*" and upon slavery, to be the future ally of the Gulf States. To this end, it has been proposed to remodel the Constitution by act of Congress, and to make the war power, transferred from the Legislative to the Executive branch of the Government, the instrument of unbridled acquisition. To this end, the national object of a central Pacific railroad has been postponed for years, in the vain hope of a Southern road for the intended Southern empire. Everywhere, in all their acts, we see these men aiming at one result, and this so plain that he who runs may read. If they had not wasted the strength of two Administrations in abortive attempts upon Kansas, they would ere now have achieved their great object of a Southern Confederacy, by securing the acquisitions which would make such a Confederacy strong in numbers, in geographical extent and position, and in its monopoly of commercial staples. With ten years more of power, and perhaps in much less time than that, they could prepare events for the final blow.

Among the things so plain that it is difficult to argue them, is this thing, that the way to put down disunion is to put down the disunionists. If the safety of the ship is threatened, we must have true men on the quarter-deck. We must shift the pilotage from those who wish to get her on to the breakers, to those who will steer for safe waters. If the Union is menaced, the first and foremost thing to be done, is to put the Government itself into the hands of men whose fidelity to the Union is not suspected. Instead of permitting its policy to be so shaped as to render disunion easy, it must be so shaped as to render disunion difficult; and when the overt act of disunion comes, if come it must, the repressive powers of the Government should be in quite other hands than in those of the instigators and confederates of the treason. To put down nullification, we must drive the nullifiers out of public employment, turn against them the batteries of patronage, and, if necessary, have in readiness to turn against them the cannon and bayonets of the Federal navy and army. It is by resisting the plotters of disunion in their preliminary measures, and not by permit-

ting them to prepare the train for the explosion which they intend, that they are to be foiled and discomfited.

So, too, if the system of slavery is the mother mischief which breeds these projects of disunion, it is by checking the expansion of that system that we shall diminish the force of the evil. Every new free State is an additional buttress of the national strength. The nullifiers threaten to dissolve the Union if they cannot spread slavery into all the Territories; but we know well that they will only be the better able to dissolve it with every addition to their territorial power. It is not by putting weapons into their hands, but by disarming them, that we shall make them harmless and ourselves safe.

It is said, however, that the Republican party is a geographical party, and that its elevation to power is, on that account, dangerous to the Union. This view of the subject is undoubtedly entitled to weight. It was, at the formation of the Republican party, embarrassing to many intelligent and worthy persons. A fear of geographical parties is among our earliest and best traditions, and so far as the Republican party has been sincerely objected to on that ground, I am well disposed to respect the objection, not merely because it originates in a meritorious solicitude for the Union, but because it rests upon plausibilities which may easily mislead honest minds.

In the outset I admit, to the fullest extent, that the Republican party, looking not to its principles, but to its organization, and the location of its strength, is a sectional party. It is deplorable that such a party should be sectional, but it is not the less true because it is deplorable. The doctrines in respect to slavery of Washington, of Jefferson, and of all the fathers, if held at all in the South, are cherished in secret. Open adhesion to them is not permitted, and it has come to pass that the policy of the non-extension of slavery, which was a Virginia policy, and a national policy in the early history of the Government, is now so exclusively the policy of the free States as to be a sectional policy. In that sense, Republicanism is sectional, although the fault does not lie at the doors of those who have abided by the old landmarks, but at the doors of those who have seen new lights, and are travelling in strange paths. But be the fault whose it may, the fact remains, and the gravity of the fact is undeniable.

The common notion of a geographical party includes the idea of some special geographical advantage sought to be obtained by it, and it is in this, perhaps, more than in anything else, that the odium of such parties consists. If that element is essential to the idea of a geographical party, the Republican party is acquit of the charge of being such. Republicanism proposes no special advantages for the free States. It is founded upon the belief that the exclusion of slavery from the Territories is best for the whole country. If it proposes to preserve the Territories for the white race, it is for the white race of the South, as well as of the North. When Mr. Jefferson was laboring to keep slavery out of

the Northwestern Territory, it was not to injure his own Virginia, but to effect a good, in which the citizens of Virginia would participate as freely as the citizens of Massachusetts. It is upon a general question of political morals and political economy, that the North and South, once accordant, are now antagonized by the adoption of new views on the part of the South. No exclusive advantage is aimed at by the free States, and this circumstance relieves the existing sectional separation of parties of the most dangerous ingredient of such parties.

This question of sections has two sides to it. If the policy of the non-extension of slavery is sectional, the policy of extending it is equally so. If the North is massed against the South, the South is massed against the North. If the triumph of one section over another is dangerous, it is a danger not to be avoided, where the two sections are pitted against each other. The difficulty is in the existence of geographical parties. As long as they do exist, the one or the other must be victorious, and the one or the other must be defeated. If it is not permissible for the majority section to make use of its numerical power, the control of the Government is devolved upon the minority section, and this is to administer public affairs upon a principle which is, at one and the same time, sectional and anti-republican. If parties have become geographical, it is equally sectional for the slave States to prescribe who shall not be President, as for the free States to determine who shall be. It is as much sectionalism to say that Mr. Lincoln shall not be President, because he has substantially no support at the South, as to insist that Mr. Lincoln shall be elected by the sole will and choice of the North. I have never been able to see, nor has it ever been intelligibly pointed out, how the dynasty of one set of States is any more national than the dynasty of another set of States. If, however, aside from the principles which may be involved, there is any determining test of nationality, it must be the test of numbers; and in America, that indescribable odor, the odor of nationality, does not exhale from minorities.

Come what may of it, the majority must rule, or the Government is in effect revolutionized, even if free forms survive. Precious as the Union is, it is not worth the sacrifice of liberty to preserve it; nor can it be long preserved by such a sacrifice. The safety of Governments is in their firmness, and to yield to intimidation is to encourage the seditious, and render them more dangerous. There will be no end to threats of dissolving the Union, if they are found to be effective in controlling political results. A Government kept along by surrender to sectional clamors is a Government existing by a paltry and temporary shift, and such an existence is as rickety as it is ignominious.

Undoubtedly, the existence of geographical parties is a misfortune; but the question is, whether the continuance of the present fact of such parties is more likely to be prolonged or terminated by the triumph of the Republican party. Upon that point, I have three observations to make, by no means exhausting the sub-

ject, but either of them, as it seems to me, decisive of the question.

In the first place, Southern politicians are exclusively responsible for the existence of geographical parties. They deliberately contrived the political unity of the South by the extreme measures of 1854, with the double view to party power, so long as the Union lasts, and to breaking the Union up, when their plans could be ripened for that final result. They carried the Presidential election of 1856 upon this basis of the unity of the South; and to preserve it, is, to-day, their openly proclaimed policy. They make no secret of it, and the whole world could see it if they attempted to disguise it. In this policy, so far found profitable, they will persevere until they find it unprofitable. The South will be kept united to rule the country until a Northern union overpowers it. The scheme of a united South will be abandoned when it proves a failure, and not before. So long as Southern politicians, by banding together, can put up and put down at pleasure, so long as their support is a passport to the Presidency, and their opposition a disqualification for that office, they will remain banded together. Most assuredly, they will persevere in that line of tactics, so long as the nation rewards it with success. What will dissolve this Southern combination, is defeat. Victory will consolidate it, and make it perpetual.

In the second place, it is only by the success of the Republican party that the people of the South can be disabused of the false ideas of the purposes of that party, which originate so considerable a part of their repugnance to it and apprehensions from it. The Republican party, once in power, will be judged by its acts, and these acts will be an expression of its real character and purposes. But at present, this character and these purposes are so distorted by designing misrepresentations, and honest fears at the South, that it is hardly wonderful that adhesion to the Republican party is not tolerated there by public opinion. The people in that section, who are not permitted either to read Republican documents or to hear Republican speakers, must necessarily derive their notions of Republicanism from men interested to deceive them. An actual administration of the Government by the Republican party will dispel illusions which can be dispelled in no other way, and, by restoring Southern confidence in the just and constitutional purposes of the North, will tend to restore fraternal concord to the country.

And, finally, I can see no basis for solid peace except in such a decided manifestation of the national will, as the election of a Republican President would be, that slavery shall not be extended, as will repress the efforts in that direction which have been the sole cause of existing disturbances. In the admirable words of Mr. Lincoln, repeated more than once in his discussions with Judge Douglas, "*the public mind rested in the belief,*" prior to the repeal of the Missouri compromise; that slavery, limited to the States in which it had long existed, was even in them only a temporary institution, which would be ameli-

orated, and finally terminated, in the safe and regular order of social advancement. In no other "*belief*" is it possible for the public mind to "*rest*," and we shall have no "*rest*" until this old "*belief*" is restored. There may be hollow truces, but no real and definitive peace, until slavery ceases to be aggressive. The controversy must be ended before there can be peace; and while it is impossible for the free States to give up their resistance to the expansion of slavery, it is not only possible, but easy, for the South to abandon efforts in that direction, which are contrary to all their former opinions, and in which it is not certain that even now a majority of their people freely and deliberately concur.

I do not disguise from myself, nor do I attempt to disguise from you, the difficulties in which the country is involved, and the grave dangers by which it is menaced. But mere timidity differs widely from rational caution, and danger, which is never avoided by being blind to it, is rarely escaped by running away from it. Wounds in the back are as fatal as wounds in front, and more lives are lost in retreats than in attacks. The Southern mind has been brought into a dangerous condition by the long-continued efforts of restless and designing men, and by the cowardice of the conservative classes there, who have been the passive spectators of a course of things which they should have restrained and prevented. The end at length reached is, that if the nullifying leaders of the South are permitted to retain the control of the Government, they will certainly break up the Union; and, at the same time, they cannot be dislodged from the control of the Government without exasperation, disturbance, and threatened resistance. That is the alternative, admitted to be serious; but wise men will not hesitate which branch of it to accept. At whatever risk, these nullifiers must be put out and put down, and it is a matter of congratulation that the operation of putting them down is so much easier and safer than it would have been four years ago, and that it has been made so by their own acts.

The breaking up of the Charleston and Baltimore Conventions was a *coup d'état*; but all *coups d'état* are not successful, and this one unmarked designs prematurely, and plucked fruit which was not ripe.

The spectacle of that firm, wise, and constitutional administration of the Government, which we have a right to expect from Mr. Lincoln, will allay apprehensions, remove prejudices, and effect a permanent restoration of fraternal concord. And it is precisely for this reason that the advocates of disunion for the sake of disunion insist that the inauguration of a Republican President shall be the signal for civil war, "*without waiting*," to quote Mr. Keitt's words, "*for overt acts.*" If Mr. Keitt, and men like him, really anticipated "*overt acts*" which would justify resistance, they would be well content to wait for them. It is because they know that all the alarms which they have propagated among their people will be dissipated by the event, that they now insist that "*overt acts*" shall not be waited for. Mr. Keitt regards it as among the most fatal effects of the

election of a Republican President, that it will teach the people of the North the secret of their power; and that, having asserted it once, they will assert it again and forever.

For politicians of the disunion school, an effect still more fatal is the lesson it will teach the people of the South, that they have nothing to fear as to any of their real rights, or true interests, from the free States. When that lesson is once practically taught, the vocation of Mr. Keitt, and of men like him, is gone.

For myself, I do not despair of seeing the country once more as united as it was in former times, and witness everywhere, revived and invigorated even, that old spirit of patriotism which embraced every section of the Confederacy. In truth, the Union should be strengthened with time, instead of being weakened by it, because each revolving year is an additional witness of the inestimable blessings which it confers. In all the discussions of these later and evil times, in which it has been my fortune large-

ly to participate, I have scrupulously abstained from any word which could offend the just susceptibilities of fellow citizens who happened to be born under a warmer sun. I have no such word to utter now, since a personal knowledge of them has confirmed many of the favorable prepossessions of early party association. I am willing to-day to yield everything to them, except convictions of duty. But it is not by emasculated platitudes that the country is to be saved. Liberty is a tree of robust growth, and it is not the free winds of the heavens, to which it spreads its branches and opens its foliage, which it has to fear, but the slow rot, which, unseen, may eat out its trunk. Collisions of honestly differing opinions are not dangerous. The worst danger is the possible advent of that time when men shall cease to have opinions, and when the flippant persiflage of materialism and of selfish indulgence shall have destroyed all sincere beliefs and all generous sentiments.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

BUELL & BLANCHARD, PRINTERS.

1860.

Published by the Republican Association of Washington, D. C. Price 50 cents per hundred.

